Chapter 88: Solitär

I STILL FEEL NOTHING.
IS IT AN EMOTION I CANNOT COMPREHEND AFTER ALL?
IF YOU'RE WAITING FOR AN OPPORTUNITY, IT'S POINTLESS.
WHO ARE YOU?
MY NAME IS WAHRHEIT. I'M ONE OF THE THREE GREAT KNIGHTS OF THE NORTHERN LANDS.
I SEE. SEEMS LIKE I'VE BEEN IN THIS REGION FOR TOO LONG.
HUMANS ARE ALWAYS SENDING RECKLESS NUISANCES LIKE YOU AFTER ME.
PLEASE DON'T MIND ME.
I WAS PLANNING ON LEAVING ANYWAY.
THAT'S NOT AN OPTION.
MY ORDERS COME FROM THE EMPEROR HIMSELF.
WHAK
IT IS MY DUTY TO ERADICATE THE DEMON KING'S ENTIRE ARMY FROM THIS LAND.
I SEE YOU HAVEN'T TURNED THIS VILLAGE INTO GOLD.
SO WHAT?
AMONG THE VILLAGES YOU'VE RAIDED, SOME WERE TURNED INTO GOLD AND SOME WERE NOT.
MY GUESS IS YOU NEED TO MEET SOME COMPLEX CONDITIONS TO ACTIVATE THE SPELL.
I'M GOING TO MAKE SURE YOU MEET NONE OF THEM TODAY.
"CONDITIONS"?
WHAT?
GIVE ME A BREAK.
DO HUMANS NEED TO CONSIDER SUCH DIFFICULT THINGS JUST TO USE MAGIC?
DO YOU HAVE TO THINK ABOUT HOW YOU MOVE YOUR LIMBS EVERY TIME YOU LIFT YOUR ARM?
WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?
I'LL ANSWER YOUR QUESTION.
I DO WHAT I FEEL.
THEN, WHY...?
THERE ARE NO "CONDITIONS" TO MY MAGIC.
IF I WEREN'T HOLDING BACK, THIS FIGHT WOULD ALREADY BE OVER.
KLINK
KLINK
WHY HAVEN'T I TURNED YOU TO GOLD ALREADY?
THE REASON IS SIMPLE.
ALL YOUR SKILLS, YOUR TRAINING, AND YOUR BRAVERY ARE AS NOTHING AGAINST MY MAGIC.
THAT WOULD HAVE BEEN BORING.
CAN YOU EVEN CALL THIS A FIGHT?
IS IT FUN FOR YOU?
ANSWER ME.
PERSONALLY, I HATE THIS KIND OF FIGHT.
I'VE HEARD STORIES ABOUT AN ODD DEMON WHO STUDIES HUMANITY.
IS THAT YOU?
YES.
I AM SOLITÄR.
MACHT.
IS IT THE FIRST TIME YOU'VE SEEN ONE?
YEAH.
I DIDN'T KNOW A FISH THIS LARGE LIVED IN THE OCEAN.
I SEE.
SO IT LOOKS LIKE A FISH TO YOU?
ISN'T IT CHARMING?
THIS SHIPYARD ONCE BELONGED TO HUMANS. IT'S MINE NOW.
AND THESE ARE...?
SKELETONS.
ARE THEY FROM THE FISH CREATURE WE SAW EARLIER?
ONE OF THEM IS.
CAN YOU SEE THAT THEIR SKELETAL STRUCTURES ARE COMPLETELY DIFFERENT?
HAVE YOU HEARD THE TERM "CONVERGENT EVOLUTION"?
...NO.
I SEE.
THE DEMON KING...
...TAUGHT IT TO ME.
THAT ONE IS A FISH...
...AND THIS ONE IS A MAMMAL.
THIS GUY'S ANCESTORS WERE...
...ORIGINALLY LAND ANIMALS.
BUT THEY BEGAN LIVING IN THE OCEAN, AND AFTER A VERY LONG TIME...
...THEY EVENTUALLY BECAME VERY SIMILAR TO A LARGE FISH.
THESE TWO, YOU SEE...
...ARE TOTALLY DIFFERENT CREATURES DESPITE THEIR SIMILAR APPEARANCE.
ISN'T THAT FASCINATING?
WHY DON'T WE HAVE EMOTIONS SUCH AS MALICE OR GUILT?
YOU'VE COME TO ASK ME SUCH A FOOLISH QUESTION?
YOU SHOULD HAVE KNOWN THE ANSWER TO THAT FROM THE MOMENT YOU WERE BORN.
DEMONS WOULD HAVE GONE EXTINCT A LONG TIME AGO IF WE FELT GRIEF EVERY TIME WE DECEIVED HUMANS.
WHAT DOES GRIEF FEEL LIKE?
IT'S AN EMOTION WE WILL NEVER UNDERSTAND.
WE LOOK LIKE HUMANS.
AND WE CAN BEHAVE JUST LIKE HUMANS.
WE SPEAK THE SAME LANGUAGE AS HUMANS.
ALL PROOF THAT WE HAVE EVOLVED IN ORDER TO DECEIVE...
...AND PREY UPON THEM.
DESPITE THE SIMILARITIES IN OUR APPEARANCES, WE ARE FAR FROM HUMAN.
THEY CALL US MAN-EATING MONSTERS, AFTER ALL.
WE ARE COMPLETELY DIFFERENT CREATURES.
IT'S ONLY NATURAL THAT THEY HAVE EMOTIONS INCOMPREHENSIBLE TO US.
TELL ME, MACHT...
ARE YOU ABLE TO IMAGINE THE EMOTIONS OF A SMALL, WINGED INSECT?
IT'S THE SAME THING.
IT'S A WASTE OF TIME.
IF WE CAN LEARN TO COMPREHEND HUMAN EMOTIONS, WE MAY BE ABLE TO COEXIST.
WE'VE GOT PLENTY OF TIME. WE'RE DEMONS AFTER ALL.
CO-EXIST?
YOU **ARE** A STRANGE ONE.
MACHT OF THE GOLDEN LAND, ONE OF THE SEVEN SAGES OF DESTRUCTION.
I NEED YOUR HELP TO DEFEAT THE HERO OF THE SOUTH.
SCHLACHT.
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